(b) There are no statutory regulations regarding utilisation of aircraft. However, all aircrafts are maintained strictly according to the norms stipulated by the manufacturers and duly approved by the Director General of Civil Aviation. Various maintenance checks are carried out at specified intervals and certified by appropriately licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineers. The officials of the DGCA also carry out random checks to ensure that the stipulated requirements are adhered to by the airlines.

(c) None. All the aircraft operated by Indian Airlines hold the current Certificates of Airworthiness.

(d) Yes, Sir.

Losses of Air India due to Agitation of Staff

83. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present staff problem in Air-India has been resolved;

(b) what is the exact amount of loss suffered by Air India due to recent agitation by the staff;

(c) whether there is any long-term plan to resolve recurring staff matters in Air-India; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to conduct a scientific study to compare the strength of staff, salary structure and expected workload of the staff of Air-India with other international airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) No, Sir. The problem has not yet been resolved fully.

(b) The estimated loss of revenue calculated for the period 30th September, to 26th October, 1988 is rupees Seven crores approximately.

(c) Staff matters are resolved as and when these arise.

(d) Staff strength and salary structure are reviewed from time to time.

Losses of Air India

84. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what is the loss suffered by Air India for the year 1987-88;

(b) what are the principal reason for the same;

(c) what remedial measures are being taken by Government in this regard; and

(d) what is the expected loss during 1988-89?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) Air India incurred a loss of Rs. 43.41 crores during the year 1987-88.

(b) Principal reason for the losses in 1987-88 have been due to :—

(i) Drop in total revenue due to fall in yield.

(ii) Impounding of one aircraft at Lagos.

(iii) Additional interest and depreciation burden due to acquisition of aircraft.

(iv) Higher fuel prices.

(v) Higher wage bill due to interim relief.

(vi) Higher landing charges in India.

(c) Following steps have been taken to further improve the performance of Air India:—

(i) Faster non-top services between India and U.K have been introduced from 15th February, 1988.

(ii) Special Cell has been created for Business Class traffic with a view to improve the yields.

(iii) Efforts are being made to improve inflight services and ground handling.

(iv) In order to augment the fleet two B-747-300 (Combi) aircraft have been ordered for delivery in 1988. One aircraft has already been received.

(v) Computerised passenger check-in has been introduced at Bombay and Delhi and will be gradually extended to other airports.

(vi) Improved servicing in cargo and increase marketing and sales efforts by ensuring prompt and efficient response to consumer needs and computerisation of cargo services.

(vii) Computerisation over next one year, link up of agencies with reservations, systems, introducing automatic baggage labelling, boarding pass to baggage labelling, boarding pass to speed up passenger handling and improve on time departure of flights.

(viii) Exercise control on expenditure.

(d) Air India has budgeted a profit of Rs. 1 crore during 1988-89?

Frequency of Ashram Express and Sarvodaya Express Trains

85. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal for increasing the frequency of 505|506 Ashram Express and 181|182 Sarvodaya Express trains linking Ahmedabad with Delhi, if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) what is the average waiting list on both ends and whether there is a justification for augmenting the present strength of coaches in each train; and

(c) whether in view of long journey time of Sarvodaya Express there is a proposal to shorten the time by a few hours for the convenience of travelling public?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MA. HABIR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Based on the traffic requirements, frequency of 505|506 Ashram Express has been increased from 4 days a week to daily with effect from 1.11.1988. However, there is no proposal at present to increase the frequency of 181|182 Sarvodaya Express. It it not operationally feasible to augment their loads on a regular basis.

(c) No, Sir.

Staff aircraft ratio of Air India

86. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what is the Staff-Aircraft ratio of Air India and in what manner it compares with other international airlines;

(b) whether it is on the higher side, if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps are contemplated by Government to streamline the system so as to enhance efficiency with just enough hands?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) The staff-aircraft ratio of Air India is 756. Compared to other international airlines, the staff aircraft ratio of Air India is high.

(b) Like other international airlines, Air India does not give certain jobs on contract to outside parties. Air India has on its pay roll, staff for security arrangements, civil works and properties, ground services, transport for staff|crew, canteen facilities etc.

(c) Air India has a Human Resources Development Department headed by a senior departmental head which carries out manpower studies to review additional requirements|vacancy position. At present only vacancies which are absolutely necessary, particularly in the operational areas, are allowed to be filled. Compared to the staff strength of 17,764 as on 1st April, 1984, as on 1st October, 1988 the staff strength has declined to 17,381.

Fatigue element of pilots operating A.I. and I.A. Flights

87. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state: